

Torreon Sister Cities program, Arte Americas, Fresno Metropolitan Rotary, and previously served as the state president of the Mexican American Political Association.

Betty Rodriguez has also been active in a number of community organizations, helping to found the League of Mexican American Women, and participating in Ladies Aid to Retarded Citizens, the League of Women Voters, the Mexican-American Political Association, Friends of the Library, and countless other organizations. Despite her many commitments to the community, she has also been a devoted caretaker of the Rodriguez home throughout their 50 years of marriage and has been the behind the scenes leader keeping the family very close.

The key to Armando and Betty's 50 years together has been their undiminished love for each other and for those around them, and their shared and deep desire to contribute to the local community.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me today in congratulating Armando and Betty Rodriguez on celebrating their 50th year of marriage, and expressing our hope that they are blessed with many more joyous years together.

COMMENDATION OF MARIO CRUZ

HON. GARY G. MILLER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 13, 2000

Mr. GARY MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate Mario Cruz, a Victorville High School student, for his numerous and laudable achievements.

Mario's commitment to education is demonstrated by his perfect attendance record and excellent grades. His ability to excel in school is made all the more impressive when one takes into account the exclusive attention he gives to his home duties, while additionally helping to support himself through work and occupational training.

Despite losing both of his parents at a young age, Mario has remained positive in nature and dedicated to building a prosperous personal and community life. Mario's overwhelming triumph over difficult and challenging circumstances is both moving and inspiring.

Mario's long list of educational accomplishments include attaining excellent grades, being in the top 5% of his class, achieving perfect attendance, serving as a Junior Class Officer and Key Club Officer, attending after school occupational training, and summer school classes for extra credit.

Mario's decision to remain alcohol, tobacco, drug and gang free and his incalculable future potential serve as an invaluable and exemplary model of dedication, honesty, determination, strength of character and success for his community and peers.

Respected and well-liked by all teachers and peers alike, Mario Cruz embodies the finest qualities of America's youth.

Mario has also been fortunate enough to have the unwavering support of a group of Diamond Bar, Pomona, and Victorville residents and community leaders including Dr. Joseph Eiswert, D.M.D., who operates the Smilemakers dental practice; Christine Briggs,

the Executive Director for, United Way; Felix and Margaret Diaz; Lyle Henry; Mel Friedland, Esq.; Dorothy Harper, Esq.; John Clifford, Esq.; Marta Melendez of Catholic Charities; Sister Sharon Becker, Vice President, at St. Mary's Medical Center; Rhonda Morken, the Executive Director of One 2 One Mentors; Ronald Wilson, Chairman, President, and CEO of Desert Community Bank, DCB; Peter Schmidt, Vice President of UmLab; Eddie Cortez, Mayor of Pomona, Mike Radlovic 41st. Congressional District Bush Campaign, GOP Chair, and Lincoln Club President; Edda Gahm Diamond Bar Republican Woman's Club, Bush Campaign Chair; Diamond Bar Councilman Robert Huff; Carolyn Elfelt and Dr. York Lee, Walnut Valley Unified School District Board Members; Nancy J. Mc Cracken, Brenda Phyllis Engdahl, Pomona Unified School District; Nick Anis, Diamond Bar Sister City, President; Patricia Anis, Vice Chair Diamond Bar Parks and Recreation Commission; Gil Villavicencio, Owner, Whole Enchilada restaurant chain; and others.

These individuals have pledged their support for "Project Mario," an effort aimed at helping this promising high school junior complete his secondary education and continue on at a four-year college.

Mr. Speaker, it is with great pride that I congratulate Mario Cruz and extend to him this much deserved recognition for his courage of both heart and mind.

TRIBUTE TO CALIFORNIA STATE SENATOR TERESA P. HUGHES

HON. JULIAN C. DIXON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 13, 2000

Mr. DIXON. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to have this opportunity to pay tribute to California State Senator Teresa P. Hughes, who is retiring at the end of this year concluding more than a quarter of century in distinguished public service to the citizens of California. During her illustrious career in the California Assembly and Senate, Teresa Hughes has authored and/or co-authored hundreds of important legislative initiatives resulting in improved standards of living for the citizens of our great State. I am, therefore, proud to publicly commend her for her exemplary service and to share this retrospective of her exceptional career with my colleagues.

A native of New York City, Teresa Hughes received her bachelor of science in Physiology and Public Health and completed her graduate work in Sociology at Hunter College. She holds a master of arts in education administration from New York University, and earned a Ph.D. in education administration from the Claremont Graduate School in Claremont, CA. She is married to physician Dr. Frank E. Staggers, and is the proud mother of attorney Vincent Hughes and Los Angeles Superior Court Judge Deirdre Hughes.

Dr. Teresa Hughes was elected to the California State Assembly in a special election on June 17, 1975. Over the next 17 years she authored numerous legislative initiatives, including measures establishing the Hughes Earthquake Safety Act of 1987; the Hughes-Hart Education Reform Act of 1983; and the Conflict Resolution and School Violence Re-

duction Program. In addition, she successfully fought for increased funding for research grants into the causes of Lupus and high blood pressure, diseases that disproportionately impact the African-American community.

Owing largely to her keen leadership skills and legislative acumen, while serving in the Assembly she was selected by her peers to Chair the Committees on Education; Human Services; and Housing and Community Development. She served as the first chair of the California Legislative Black Caucus, as well as the California Women Legislators Caucus.

In recognition of her distinguished contributions to public education, in 1988 the Los Angeles Unified School District honored then-Assemblywoman Hughes by renaming an elementary school in her name in the city of Cudahy, CA. The "Teresa Hughes Elementary School," thus stands as a fitting legacy to her longtime, public and personal commitment to ensuring quality education for California's school children.

For the past 6 years, State Senator Hughes has continued her strong advocacy for the citizens of California. Currently, she is the Chair of the Senate Committee on Public Employment and Retirement, and is a member of the Committees on Appropriations; Education; Energy, Utilities, and Communications; Government Organization; Health and Human Services; and Insurance.

Mr. Speaker, for more than 25 years, Teresa Hughes has selflessly committed herself to improving the human condition for the people of the great state of California. She has carved out an enviable legislative record, and leaves a legacy for every young person to emulate who aspires to a career in public service. I am proud to call her my friend and to single her out for this special recognition here today.

I have no doubt that she will continue to make contributions to our society, even as she prepares to set sail on a new course. On behalf of the citizens of my congressional district, I want to thank her for her service. I wish her and Frank, a future that is rich with good health and good fortune.

INS SHOULD NOT DEPORT THE MART FAMILY TO ROMANIA

HON. DARLENE HOOLEY

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 13, 2000

Ms. HOOLEY of Oregon. Mr. Speaker, I rise today on behalf of a family that I have come to know very well in my time in Congress.

Julian and Veronica Mart and their children Paul and Adelina fled their homeland of Romania in the turmoil surrounding the downfall of communism. They came to the United States, like so many others before them, seeking its promise, and fleeing from a country where the freedom we cherish was unknown. They fled tyranny and persecution and wanted nothing more than to live out the American dream, to make a better life for themselves and their children.

When they entered America, Lady Liberty welcomed them to our shores—but the INS did not. The INS has done everything in its considerable powers to deny the Marts the opportunity to live the American dream. The INS